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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 002678

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARN, NEA/PA, NEA/AIA, INR/NESA, R/MR,
I/GNEA, B/BXN, B/BRN, NEA/PPD, NEA/IPA FOR ALTERMAN
USAID/ANE/MEA
LONDON FOR GOLDRICH
PARIS FOR O'FRIEL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR JO](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON ROAD MAP, ALTERNATIVE
PALESTINIAN HOMELAND IN JORDAN, IRAQ, SYRIA

NEWS REPORTS

ROAD MAP

DAILIES REPORTED THE MEETING BETWEEN A/S. BURNS AND
ABOU MAZEN. THE STORIES HIGHLIGHTED THAT BURNS DID
NOT CONVEY TO THE PALESTINIANS AN ISRAELI UNDERTAKING
TO IMPLEMENT THE ROAD MAP, THAT HE ASKED ABU MAZEN TO
FIGHT TERRORISM, AND THAT, AT THE SAME TIME, HE ASKED
THE ISRAELIS TO STOP SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY.

IRAQ

THE LEAD STORY IN SEMI-OFFICIAL INFLUENTIAL ARABIC
DAILY AL-RAI WAS GEN. GARNER'S PROMISE THAT A JOINT
IRAQI-AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION WOULD BE FORMED BY MID
MAY. THE SAME STORY APPEARED ON THE FRONT PAGES OF
ALL JORDANIAN DAILIES, WHICH HIGHLIGHTED THE
PARTITIONING OF IRAQ INTO FOUR ADMINISTRATIVE AREAS..

SEMI-OFFICIAL INFLUENTIAL ARABIC DAILY AL-RAI REPORTED
A STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, THAT
WASHINGTON DID NOT INVITE JORDAN TO TAKE PART IN THE
SECURITY-KEEPING FORCES IN IRAQ, AND THAT THE COUNTRY'S
PARTICIPATION IN SUCH AN EFFORT IS CONTINGENT ON AN
INTERNATIONAL MANDATE.

ALL DAILIES REPORTED THE ARREST OF HUDA AMMASH, THE
IRAQI MICROBIOLOGICAL SCIENTIST AND MEMBER OF THE
BA'TH COUNCIL WHO WAS 53RD ON THE LIST OF IRAQIS
WANTED BY THE U.S.

SYRIA

SEMI-OFFICIAL INFLUENTIAL ARABIC DAILY AL-RAI REPORTED
THAT THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION DENIED ANY KNOWLEDGE
OF A SECRET MEETING BETWEEN MAHER AL-ASSAD AND THE
FORMER SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE ISRAELI MINISTRY OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS, EITAN TSOUR.

EDITORIAL COMMENTARIES

-- LEST THE AMERICAN OCCUPATION BE GIVEN INTERNATIONAL
LEGITIMACY

FORMER SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE
MOHAMMAD NAJI AMAYREH WROTE IN SEMI-OFFICIAL
INFLUENTIAL ARABIC DAILY AL-RAI ON MAY 6: "THE U.S.
SEEKS TO EMBELLISH THE IMAGE OF ITS OCCUPATION BY
SEEKING THE ASSISTANCE OF COUNTRIES FROM OUTSIDE THE
SO-CALLED COALITION, IN ORDER TO DISTRACT ATTENTION
FROM ITS VIOLATIONS IN IRAQ, THAT INCLUDE ITS ATTEMPTS
TO PARTITION IRAQ, THAT IT SEEKS TO DO GRADUALLY AND
WITHOUT FUSS. THE UN AND COUNTRIES OF THE REGION
SHOULD BE CAREFUL NOT TO BE LURED INTO GIVING THE
OCCUPATION AN INTERNATIONAL LEGITIMACY THAT IT LACKS."

-- EXPORTING BOMBASTIC SLOGANS TO THE IRAQIS
DAILY COLUMNIST MAHMOUD AL-RIMAWI WROTE IN SEMI-
OFFICIAL INFLUENTIAL ARABIC DAILY AL-RAI ON MAY 6:
"THE AUTOMATIC RUSH TO [ADVOCATE] ARMED RESISTANCE,
UNDER THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, WILL ONLY INCREASE
THE SUFFERING OF THE IRAQIS, DELAY THE EVOLUTION OF AN
ADMINISTRATION, AND PRODUCE MORE SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS
DIVIDES. ALTHOUGH ONE ONLY BOWS IN RESPECT TO
SPORADIC ACTS OF RESISTANCE THAT AFFIRM THE IRAQIS
RIGHT TO FREEDOM, ARMED RESISTANCE SHOULD NOT BE THE
FIRST OR OPTIMAL COURSE OF ACTION AT PRESENT. WE
SHOULD TAKE THE MESSAGE FROM THE REJECTION OF ARAB
VOLUNTEERS AFTER THE REGIME COLLAPSED."

-- ISRAELI INTRANSIGENCE AND THE AMERICAN BIAS
THE LEADER COMMENTARY IN CENTER-LEFT, INFLUENTIAL
ARABIC DAILY AL-DUSTOUR ON MAY 6 READ: "THE PRESENT
ISRAELI GOVERNMENT IS VERY UNHAPPY WITH THE ROAD [TO
PEACE] AND WITH THE ROAD MAP, AND WILL PROBABLY DO ITS
UTMOST TO DETOUR THIS ROAD INTO A DIFFERENT DIRECTION
FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PALESTINIAN STATE. BUT IT
IS REGRETTABLE THAT THE U.S., WHICH INSISTED ON
PUBLISHING THE ROAD MAP WITH THE LEAST MEDIA EXPOSURE
POSSIBLE, HAS NOT YET UNDERTAKEN TO IMPLEMENT THE ROAD
MAP ACCORDING TO ITS TIME SCHEDULE, WHICH HAS ALREADY
BEEN VIOLATED BECAUSE OF THE AMERICAN INSISTENCE ON

POSTPONEMENT, WHICH CAME IN RESPONSE TO ISRAELI DEMANDS. IT IS ALSO REGRETTABLE THAT THE U.S. CONTINUES TO PRESSURE THE PALESTINIAN SIDE, WHICH ANNOUNCED CLEARLY THAT IT ACCEPTS THE ROAD MAP, INSTEAD OF EXERTING REAL EFFORTS TO PERSUADE THE GOVERNMENT OF GENERALS AND RABBIS TO ACCEPT PEACE."

-- THE IMAGE OF AMERICA

DAILY COLUMNIST BASSEM SAKAJHA WROTE IN CENTER-LEFT, INFLUENTIAL ARABIC DAILY AL-DUSTOUR ON MAY 6: "THE IMAGE OF THE U.S. MAY NEVER HAVE BEEN DARKER THAN IT IS TODAY. THE AMERICAN POLITICAL PLAN, WHICH WAS THE MORAL COVER FOR WAR AND OCCUPATION, CONSISTED OF 'PRESSING FOR DEMOCRACY' AND FINDING SOLUTIONS TO THE 'CHRONIC PROBLEMS.' THESE SEEM AT PRESENT DEVOID OF SUBSTANCE, STARTING WITH THE ROAD MAP, AND INCLUDING THE FALSE DEMOCRACY IN MORE THAN ONE PLACE OF THE ARAB WORLD."

-- THE HUB OF TENSION, AND THE CORE OF THE CONFLICT
DAILY COLUMNIST MOHAMMAD KA'WASH WROTE IN INDEPENDENT, MASS-APPEAL ARABIC DAILY AL-ARAB AL-YAWM ON MAY 6:
"THE AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION, WHICH IS ABOUT TO SINK IN THE ELECTION SEASON, WILL ALSO FIND ITSELF SUNK IN THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE WAR ON IRAQ, AND I BELIEVE THAT IT IS INCAPABLE OF PLAYING A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN FINDING A SOLUTION TO THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM. THIS MEANS THAT THE HUB OF TENSION, AND THE CAUSES OF CONFLICT WILL REMAIN IN THE MIDDLE EAST, ALL BECAUSE THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION REFUSES TO BE CONVINCED THAT THE CAUSE OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE IS THE SUBSTANCE AND THE CORE OF CONFLICT IN THE REGION." GNEHM